

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5964
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AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

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FOR PASSAGE FROM LOWMAN

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PROGRAM-MANILA TRANSIT CENTER

1. AS A FOLLOW-UP ON RECENT TALKS BY LOWMAN WITH GOA
IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF PASSAGE COULD EXPLORE WITH
DEREK VOLKER OR APPROPRIATE THE CONCEPT OF A JOINT
US/AUSTRALIAN GUARANTEE FOR REFUGEES MOVED UNDER
UNHCR AUSPICES TO TRANSIT HOLDING CAMP IN PHILIPPINES,
MACAU OR ELSEWHERE. REFUGEES WOULD INCLUDE THREE
GROUPS; 1) REFUGEES ALREADY APPROVED BY INS WITH
ALIEN NUMBER BUT AWAITING SPONSOR
ASSURANCE, 2) REFUGEES PROVISIONALLY APPROVED BY
INS BUT FOR WHOM ALIEN NUMBER NOT YET AVAILABLE AND
3) REFUGEES NOT YET APPROVED BY INS BUT WHO APPEAR
TO QUALIFY FOR US PROGRAMS.

2. OBVIOUSLY THE USG COULD NOT GIVE FIRM
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ASSURANCES FOR THE SECOND TWO GROUPS UNDER PRESENT
OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS. ALMOST ALL SUCH REFUGEES
COULD EVENTUALLY BE TAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES
PROGRAM BUT GOA ASSURANCES TO UNHCR WOULD HAVE
TO COVER THESE TWO GROUPS UNTIL THEY WERE INS
CLEARED. ADDITIONALLY, GOA WOULD HAVE TO PICK
UP THOSE WHICH ARE NOT TAKEN IN THE UNITED STATES

PROGRAM. WITH SUCH JOINT ASSURANCES, UNHCR
WOULD HAVE THE ABILITY TO GIVE ABSOLUTE
GUARANTEES TO THE TEMPORARY HOST COUNTRY.

3. VISA FALCON'S COULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE ANY
SUCH REFUGEES WERE MOVED TO THE TRANSIT FACILITY;
THUS, MINIMIZING THE POSSIBILITY OF A REALLY
DIFFICULT CASE FOR THE GOA. THE UNHCR SHOULD
ALSO INVOLVE OTHERS SUCH AS SWITZERLAND IN THIS
EFFORT TO HELP WITH ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT MEDICAL
CASES BUT IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT THE PRINCIPAL
BASE OF THE UNHCR ASSURANCES TO THE TRANSIT
COUNTRY WILL HAVE TO REST ON US AND AUSTRALIAN
GUARANTEES.

4. THERE ARE, OF COURSE, PROBLEMS POSED FOR
THE AUSTRALIANS IN SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT BUT, IF
SUCCESSFUL, IT COULD PROVIDE A BADLY NEEDED
FLEXIBILITY DURING THE COMING, LIKELY DIFFICULT
PERIOD, AND AN IMPORTANT TOOL TO RELIEVE PRESSURE
ON MALAYSIAN CAMP POPULATIONS.

5. OBVIOUSLY, AN APPROACH TO UNHCR AND ANY FINAL
DECISIONS AS TO ADVISABILITY OF SUCH AN ARRANGE-
MENT MUST AWAIT FURTHER DELIBERATION IN WASHINGTON
AND CONSIDERATION OF COST ESTIMATES AND OTHER
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PROBLEMS WITH THE ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION. GOA
AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, HOWEVER, WOULD BE
NECESSARY TO PROCEED WITH DISCUSSIONS OF SUCH
A CONCEPT.
MILLER

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